Amendments to the Claims:

1–8 (canceled)

9. (currently amended): A method for managing images, the images including a first image comprising a first identifier steganographically embedded therein, ~~in the first image in the form of a digital watermark,~~ said method comprising:

retrieving a copy of the first image from an image database;

altering the copy of the first image to provide ~~create~~ a second image;

steganographically embedding a second identifier in the second image; ~~in the form of a digital watermark~~; and

providing the steganographically embedded second image to the image database for storage, wherein the image database associates the second identifier with the first identifier so as to associate the first image and the second image.

~~associating the second image in the database with the first identifier.~~

10. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, further comprising removing the first identifier from the second image.

11. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, further comprising altering the first identifier in the second image.

12. (previously presented): The method according to claim 9, further comprising storing information related to the first image in the database.

13. (original): The method according to claim 12, wherein the related information comprises at least one of metadata, location, date, permission level, security access levels, analyst comments, notes, files, and past usage information.

14. (original): The method according to claim 13, wherein the database comprises a plurality of databases.

15-24 (canceled)

25. (currently amended): A system comprising:

a first user terminal;

a second user terminal;

a database, wherein the first user terminal and the second user terminal are in communication, and the first user terminal and the second user terminal are each in communication with the database; and

a gatekeeper to regulate the flow of at least a first image between the first user terminal and the second user terminal, wherein the first image comprises at least a first digital watermark including a first identifier, said gatekeeper to determine a security level associated with the first image, compare the first image security level with a user security level, and to allow access by the second user terminal to the first image based on a result of the comparison, ~~A system according to claim 23,~~ wherein said gatekeeper comprises or communicates with a digital watermark decoder to ~~software to~~ decode the digital

watermark to determine the first identifier, and to interrogate the database with the first identifier to retrieve the security level.

26. (currently amended): A system comprising:

a first user terminal;

a second user terminal;

a database, wherein the first user terminal and the second user terminal are in communication, and the first user terminal and the second user terminal are each in communication with the database; and

a gatekeeper to regulate the flow of at least a first image between the first user terminal and the second user terminal, wherein the first image comprises at least a first digital watermark including a first identifier, said gatekeeper to determine a security level associated with the first image, compare the first image security level with a user security level, and to allow access by the second user terminal to the first image based on a result of the comparison, ~~A system according to claim 23,~~ wherein said first image digital watermark includes security level data, and wherein said gatekeeper comprises or communicates with a digital watermark decoder to ~~software code to~~ decode the digital watermark to determine the security level data.

27. (currently amended): The [[~~A~~]] system according to claim 25 ~~23~~, wherein the user security level comprises at least one of a security level for a user and a security level for a user terminal.

28-29 (canceled)

30. (new): The system according to claim 26, wherein the user security level comprises at least one of a security level for a user and a security level for a user terminal.

31. (new): The system according to claim 25, wherein said gatekeeper records in the database a transmission of the first image from the first user terminal to the second user terminal.

32. (new): The system according to claim 26, wherein said gatekeeper records in the database a transmission of the first image from the first user terminal to the second user terminal.

33. (new): The system of claim 25, further comprising a communications server, wherein the first user terminal and the second user terminal are in communication via said communications server.

34. (new): The system of claim 26, further comprising a communications server, wherein the first user terminal and the second user terminal are in communication via said communications server.

35. (new): An apparatus comprising:

electronic processing circuitry; and

memory,

said memory comprising records stored therein, the records comprising a plurality of images, the plurality of images including a first image and a second image,

wherein the first image includes a first identifier steganographically embedded therein, and

wherein the second image includes a second identifier steganographically embedded therein,

wherein the second image is derived from the first image, and

wherein the second identifier is associated with the first identifier so that the first image and the second image are associated with one another.